

CHAPTER III - RECRUITING MEMBERS

A. THE "1-2-3" OF RECRUITING.

1. WHAT ATTRACTS NEW MEMBERS TO THE COAST GUARD AUXILIARY ?

- a. ENTHUSIASM!!! Lively instructors, aides, leaders, boat examiners and flotilla members who show their enthusiasm and pleasure in Auxiliary activities and responsibilities.
- b. FRIENDLINESS!!! A sincere greeting, smile, handshake and offer of friendship at dockside, in the classroom, at meetings, and at social occasions.
- c. FUN!!! Everyone is attracted by a fun organization...put the fun back into the Auxiliary.
- d. BOATING!!! The thrill of using your own boat on Coast Guard patrols and for search and rescue...the chance for on-the-water training...the chance to crew without prohibitive expenses...
- e. THE LIST GOES ON: . . .
 - (1) Adventure.
 - (2) Good looking uniform.
 - (3) Escape from the work place.
 - (4) Desire to make good boating friends.
 - (5) Desire for service in non-traditional areas.
 - (6) Desire for better knowledge of seamanship.
 - (7) Chance to combine a hobby with volunteer service.
 - (8) Admiration for quality and professionalism of Auxiliary members.
 - (9) Desire to be associated with the "LIFE SAVERS" - the Coast Guard.

2. THIS IS WHAT TURNS OFF PROSPECTS:

- a. NEGLECT. . .no one seems to care or follow up when a prospect shows interest.
- b. INCOMPETENCE. . .the ill-informed, sloppy, unkempt, unfriendly, unprepared instructor, proctor, leader, or member.
- c. PESSIMISM AND COMPLAINTS. . .against other members, leaders, the programs, and the Coast Guard.
- d. CLIQUES AND POWER STRUGGLES. . .most people have enough of this at work...they want to get away from them.
- e. OVERWHELMING. . .the loading down with too many books, forms, regulations, jobs--and long, boring meetings.

3. REMEMBER. . .people join the Auxiliary for their own enjoyment and personal objectives. When they find volunteer service is enjoyable and satisfies their objectives, they will respond as active members in the various Auxiliary programs.

B. RECRUITING IN THE CLASSROOM: A PRIMARY SOURCE OF POTENTIAL MEMBERS.

1. BEFORE-CLASS FRIENDLINESS. . .get on a first-name basis with prospects from boat shows, newspaper ads, CMEs, etc. This ensures that the new students already have a friend waiting for them in the classroom. Encourage use of name tags for students.
2. MAXIMUM SUPPORT. . .encourage all flotilla members to be present at all classes—in uniform and friendly. Show by example what the Auxiliary is. All instructors and aides should show enthusiasm, friendliness (caring), and competence.
3. BEST INSTRUCTOR. . .use the best instructor or another person (FC, FSO- PS, FSO- PE) who can make a positive impression to welcome the class and make some very brief comments about what the Auxiliary is all about. A best instructor should also teach the first class; this enhances recruiting and retention of students in the PE class.
4. ENTHUSIASM AND FRIENDLINESS. . .are the cornerstones for recruiting. This atmosphere must be maintained throughout the class—before class, at breaks, and after class. Arrange for time to socialize. Encourage the providing of refreshments during breaks and during the final exams. This is a good opportunity for productive recruiting.
5. COMMITMENT THROUGH ACTIVITY. . .invite the interested students out to observe flotilla member training (on land, not on-the-water training) or to a social affair, especially when members of the Coast Guard will be present. Commitment to join follows successful interaction with happy, enthusiastic members. Show the prospective member that we have fun with our service.
6. THE LONG TERM VIEW. . .the prospective or new member should have a long term goal: becoming operationally qualified, being a watchstander, etc. This will enable the member to better understand the knowledge needed to become a fully trained and qualified Auxiliarist. They also will understand what's needed and involved in supporting the flotilla's leadership and programs. Proper orientation about the Auxiliary during the Public Education course can get them on the right road to becoming a productive member.
7. TOO EARLY A START. . .don't start recruiting too early in the PE class. Students are too busy with other things early in the class. Wait until they feel more comfortable in the boating world and are ready to look for and include new things.
8. PROVIDE WRITTEN AND VERBAL INFORMATION... provide handouts about the Auxiliary, articles on activities, make use of the Minutes for Membership. (see Enclosure (8) for further details)
9. HAPPY ATMOSPHERE IS ESSENTIAL. . .remember, we are happy in the Auxiliary. We enjoy ourselves and others. We are enthusiastic with what we are doing to help the Coast Guard and the boating public. We want to share this with our new friends. We also have openings for non-boaters with special skills that are needed by the Coast Guard and the Auxiliary.

10. FIRST MEETING WITH STUDENTS. . .is of great importance. It should be one of courteous, relaxed friendliness, rather than letting our attitude or uniforms give the impression of being anything else but a group of happy boaters meeting prospective new members. PUT THEM AT EASE. We already have their respect, as they came to us for help. We are all boaters –nothing else. This is the right beginning.
11. COUPLES. . .if the boater has a spouse who also enjoys boating, encourage BOTH to participate in Auxiliary activities. There is no distinction between male and female involvement in the Auxiliary.
12. FAMILY. . .young adults, age 17 or older, make great Auxiliarists. Point out to parents the value of gaining increased boating knowledge while providing service to the nation. Let them understand that the Auxiliary can build character by promoting and fostering personal traits, such as, initiative and responsibility.
13. A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS.
 - a. What student isn't stirred by a colorful slide or video presentation showing Auxiliarists doing search and rescue at sea, teaching navigation in the classroom, advising boaters on safety measures, enjoying good fellowship, and always looking professional in those uniforms!
 - b. A typed narration and music may be added to the Auxiliary slide presentation, if desired. Pictures of the flotilla's instructors on SAR duty have a great personal appeal to most students. Well-done video tape of local operational activities or on-the-water training can also be used with great success.
 - c. All divisions should have a copy of the new *THIS IS THE COAST GUARD AUXILIARY*, an eight and one half minute video-tape (VHS) and *TEAM COAST GUARD*, a fifteen minute video. These videos are excellent for PE classes, safe boating booths at shopping malls and boat shows, and during public appearances at local clubs and organizations.
14. OTHER COURSES. . .recruiting in the Basic Coastal Navigation (BCN) and Advanced Coastal Navigation (ACN) classes. Students in these classes are primarily interested in becoming better qualified. As such, they are much more receptive to the idea of joining the Auxiliary. Boat Crew Qualification, our Specialty Courses, the hands-on training in Member Training, and actual operational activities are very attractive opportunities to them.

C. RECRUITING ON THE DOCKS.

1. BE SELECTIVE. . .look for well-kept boats and knowledgeable, competent skippers or those who are clearly interested in learning.
2. COMPLIMENTS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME. . .compliment the skipper on the boat and its appearance...ask a few questions about the boat...show interest in the person's boat.

3. HOW DO YOU USE YOUR BOAT? . . .many owners will be interested in additional ways to use their boat without increasing their boating expenses. Fishing and cruising around are not always enough. Many will find patrolling and chart updating most attractive and appealing activities.
4. HAVE YOU CONSIDERED JOINING THE U. S. COAST GUARD AUXILIARY? . . .most people like to be asked (invited) to join. Give them a copy of the *JOIN THE AUXILIARY* pamphlet with your name and telephone number listed on it.
5. WOULD YOU BE INTERESTED? . . .in using your boat to help the Coast Guard on patrol missions?...or...as an experienced boater—in sharing your boating skills with others? Invite them to a flotilla meeting and inform them of upcoming PE courses.
6. THE COAST GUARD AUXILIARY WILL TRAIN YOU. . . by providing a course of advanced seamanship instruction and affording you opportunities to gain underway experience on Auxiliary operational missions.
7. USE AUXILIARY BUSINESS CARDS. . .stimulate interest. The use of Auxiliary business cards with the name of the Auxiliarist, FC, or FSO-PS can serve to create curiosity and open the door for a productive recruiting dialogue.
8. HAVE AN ORGANIZED FOLLOW-UP. . .for interested prospects. Have a friendly get-together for further discussion and commitment...develop friendships, send invitations for meetings, classes and social events. Don't shut the door on the person who turns down an invitation. Remember that their circumstances may change and they may be interested at some future date.
9. CRITICAL FACTORS. . .remember that one of the most critical factors in recruiting members is YOU: YOUR ATTITUDE - YOUR KNOWLEDGE - YOUR APPEARANCE.
10. For additional ideas, refer to Enclosures (9) and (10).

D. RECRUITING FROM NON-TRADITIONAL SOURCES.

1. New service opportunities:
 - a. Marine Environmental Safety
 - (1) Public outreach and Sea Partners
 - (2) Licensing and exam administration
 - (3) Harbor pollution patrols
 - (4) Spill reconnaissance and sampling
 - b. Aids for Navigation
 - (1) Federal and private
 - (2) Bridge inspections

- c. Coast Guard Aviation
 - (1) Flight standards and training
 - (2) Air patrols
 - (3) Air transport
 - d. Computer Systems
 - (1) Marine Safety Information systems
 - (2) Information resource management
 - e. Coast Guard Administrative Support
 - (1) Recruiting assistance
 - (2) Worklife personnel support
 - (3) Photography
 - (4) Writing
 - (5) Public appearances with Coast Guard
 - f. Coast Guard Operational Support
 - (1) Crew on Coast Guard vessels
 - (2) Radio Watchstanding
 - (3) Assistant to active duty teams
 - (4) Vessel factory visits
2. NEW SOURCES - In order to recruit new members to fulfill these service opportunities, it is important to widen the scope of sources for new members:
- a. Chemical societies
 - b. Pure Waters agencies
 - c. Environmental professionals
 - d. Canal bridge and lock operators
 - e. Local airports and aviation clubs
 - f. Photography clubs
 - g. Boat builders
 - h. Ham radio clubs and shows
 - i. Retired military personnel
 - j. Local government organizations
 - k. Senior citizen groups
 - l. College and high schools
 - m. Fire departments and ambulance corps
 - n. Power Squadron and other service organizations
 - o. Local industry
3. Combining service opportunities and new recruitment sources provides a good opportunity to employ the Recruitment Team.

E. HOW TO FORM AND USE A RECRUITMENT TEAM.

1. A Recruitment Team can be a great help to the unit's recruiting program. It can be organized at the flotilla or division level. The Team should be composed of the PA, VE, PE, OP, and CC officers or be a unit of four or five selected Auxiliarists who obviously present a good impression as recruiters, are well-informed on Auxiliary programs, and wear the uniform properly and proudly. The activities of this group should be coordinated through the FC and FSO–PS or DCP and SO–PS.
2. The concept is simple. There are certain opportunities for recruiting where a little bit of coordinated effort can bring a great deal of return. This might be at a new marina or a certain area of an old marina that has not been touched by the Auxiliary. Boat show booths, fairs, CME booths, and outdoor festivals should be considered as likely sites for recruitment activity.
3. The Recruitment Team can be very effective in one or two well-planned half-day recruiting sessions.
 - a. Select two or three major targets for the year.
 - b. Decide on the most effective time of day.
 - c. Prepare advance publicity. Utilize:
 - (1) Posters on all outside entrances.
 - (2) Media announcements.
 - (3) Enlist help of other staff officers and members.
 - (4) Decide on a positive oral approach.
 - (5) Establish a sign-up procedure.
 - (6) Have handouts that work best.
 - d. Practice the oral approach and recruitment talk on each other until all members feel comfortable with it.
 - e. Develop a follow-up plan with carefully selected members to guide prospects through the New Member Entry Process.

F. ADDITIONAL RECRUITING SOURCES.

1. Boat show inquiries.
2. Referrals from the Director of Auxiliary.
3. Inquiries resulting from newspaper articles and the Internet.
4. Personal recruiting by members.
5. Referrals received by the Boating Safety Hotline located at Coast Guard Headquarters.
6. Return of the postcard requesting information provided in the JOIN THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD AUXILIARY brochure. Be sure to follow up by telephone (or letter) as soon as a response postcard is received. Invite the person to the next flotilla meeting.

G. THE FOLLOW-UP PHONE CALL.

1. A vital follow-up to any leads.
2. Should be made within one week (or sooner!) after a person expresses interest.
3. Identify yourself as an officer (or member) of the Coast Guard Auxiliary.
4. State that you understand the person has expressed an interest in learning more about the Auxiliary and its programs in assisting the Coast Guard and in promoting boating safety.
5. Ask if they are interested in receiving additional training and helping the Coast Guard and Auxiliary in boating safety activities. Be sure to let the person know that we have no law enforcement responsibilities or authority.
6. If the person is interested in taking classes, check to see if the spouse and adult children or friends might also want training. The name and phone number of the FSO-PE or Course Chairperson should be given. Be sure to follow up yourself. You may gain a future prospective member. Your efforts may help locate sufficient members to start another PE class.
7. If they are interested in helping the Coast Guard, or they show interest in the Auxiliary programs you have discussed with them, bring out these points:
 - a. The Auxiliary was authorized by Act of Congress in 1939. We have over 50 years of service to the nation.
 - b. We wear similar uniforms to that worn by Coast Guard Officers. This is an indication of the respect that the Coast Guard has for the Auxiliary. This respect is also demonstrated in the Team Coast Guard concept.
 - c. We are the civilian arm of the Coast Guard. We are a service organization composed of volunteers. We are not a social club.
 - d. We volunteer our services, time, boats, radios, and planes.
 - e. We are reimbursed for some of our operational expenses.
 - f. We are given specialized training in order to work with the Coast Guard, to conduct safety checks on recreational boats, or to teach power and/or sail boating courses. This is of great personal value to us in our own recreational boating.
 - g. Search and Rescue activities on the water, regatta patrols, and Aids to Navigation/ Chart Updating give a unique purpose to our boating. Teaching others improves our own knowledge.
 - h. We have a lot of fun during our safe boating activities and in social activities.

- i. We have well-trained vessel examiners and instructors who help to make boating safer for all of us.
- j. There are many non-traditional service opportunities available to Auxiliary members.
- 8. If you are talking to an experienced boater, you might give a compliment and suggest a special advanced program.
- 9. Never, never, never leave an applicant waiting for weeks without some follow-up calls.

H. THE "WHY AND HOW" OF RECRUITING AT THE DIVISION LEVEL.

- 1. WHY - In some divisions, one or more flotillas may be down to only a few members due to many factors: poor leadership, poor programs, poor morale, etc. These flotillas are too weak to attract or hold members. They may have deteriorated into cliques and rival factions. They may have ceased to be of benefit to the Auxiliary and to the Coast Guard. At this point, it may be necessary for the flotilla to have assistance from the Division.
- 2. HOW - Form a Division Recruitment Team consisting of Division Staff Officers for Personnel, Public Education, Vessel Examinations, Marine Dealer Visitors, Operations, Career Counselors and Public Affairs. In coordination with the Flotilla Recruitment Team (see page 3-6) these officers can provide ideas, materials and activities to:
 - a. Launch a recruitment campaign in the locale of the "weak" flotilla.
 - b. Hold a division sponsored PE class for the purpose of recruiting new members.
 - c. Support a "harbor blitz" with CMEs, MDVs, operational vessels, children's classes, radio and fire extinguisher demonstrations, etc. Have sign-up sheets for teen and adult classes.
 - d. Visit local schools, government boards, fire departments, etc. and place ads in the volunteer columns of the local newspapers and on cable television.
- 3. Rebuilding a flotilla may take extraordinary measures. It may be necessary to encourage two or more weak flotillas to consolidate for strength or encourage selected members from adjacent flotillas to transfer into the weak flotilla. With a dynamic new leader and a group of newcomers, a flotilla can rebound and Auxiliary programs can flourish.
- 4. An alternate choice - The Division might consider forming a new flotilla in an area where one has never been formed. It will take support from the Division to train a group of new Auxiliarists to support each other and the Auxiliary programs. See Enclosure (13).